

### AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The following listing of claims replaces all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Claims 1-48 (cancelled)

Claim 49. (new) A process for producing at least one alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal, or rare earth metal silicate, or a mixed silicate thereof, comprising,

reacting silica and at least one alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal, or rare earth metal halide, sulfate or nitrate in a contiguous molten mass in a reactor, and

removing said at least one alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal, or rare earth metal silicate, or a mixed silicate thereof, from said reactor in a molten state,

wherein heat and turbulence are supplied to said molten mass by combustion from one or more submerged burners.

Claim 50. (new) The process according to Claim 49, wherein the combustion supplies water to the reactor.

Claim 51. (new) The process according to Claim 49 wherein the silicate formed is further treated to make it compatible as a batch material for a glass furnace.

Claim 52. (new) The process according to Claim 49, wherein the silicate formed is fed hot into a glass furnace.

Claim 53. (new)The process according to Claim 49, comprising reacting silica and sodium sulfate.

Claim 54. (new)The process according to Claim 49, comprising reacting silica and sodium chloride.

Claim 55. (new)The process according to Claim 49, comprising reacting silica and KCl.

Claim 56. (new) The process according to Claim 49, comprising reacting silica and  $\text{CeCl}_4$ .

Claim 57. (new) The process according to Claim 50, comprising reacting silica and sodium sulfate.

Claim 58. (new)The process according to Claim 49, wherein the alkali metal is Na or K, the alkaline earth metal is Ca or Mg, and the rare earth metal is Ce.

Claim 59.(new) The process according to Claim 49, comprising reacting silica and at least one alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal, or rare earth metal halide wherein said halides are chlorides.

Claim 60. (new) The process according to Claim 49, wherein said silica and the at least one alkali metal, alkaline-earth metal, or rare earth metal halide, sulfate or nitrate are introduced to said reactor below an upper level of the molten mass.

Claim 61. (new) The process as claimed in Claim 49, wherein said process produces a mixed silicate combining at least one alkali metal and one alkaline-earth metal.

Claim 62. (new) The process as claimed in Claim 49, wherein said process produces a mixed silicate combining at least one alkali metal and one rare earth metal.

Claim 63. (new) The Process according to claim 49, wherein said combustion from one or more submerged burners is provided by combusting a solid fuel comprising carbon.

Claim 64. (new) The process according to Claim 63, wherein said solid fuel comprising carbon is coal.

Claim 65. (new) The Process according to claim 53, wherein said combustion from one or more submerged burners is provided by combusting a solid fuel comprising carbon.

Claim 66. (new)The process according to Claim 65, wherein said solid fuel comprising carbon is coal.

Claim 67. (new) The process according to claim 57, wherein said combustion from one or more submerged burners is provided by combusting a solid fuel comprising carbon.

Claim 68. (new)A process for the formation of precipitated silica from silicate, comprising:

forming silicate according to the process of Claim 49, and  
treating the silicate with acid so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 69. (new)The process according to Claim 68, wherein said acid is HCl.

Claim 70.(new) The process according to Claim 68, wherein said particles have a particle size of 1-100 nm.

Claim 71. (new)The process according to Claim 68, wherein said silicate is sodium silicate, and wherein silica is reacted with sodium sulfate in said contiguous molten mass in said reactor.

Claim 72. (new)The process according to Claim 68, comprising:

reacting silica and sodium sulfate in a contiguous molten mass in said reactor,  
removing sodium silicate from said reactor in a molten state, and  
treating the sodium silicate with  $\text{H}_2\text{SO}_4$ .

Claim 73. (new) The process according to Claim 72, wherein said particles have a particle size of 1-100 nm.

Claim 74. (new) The process according to claim 68, wherein said combustion from one or more submerged burners is provided by combusting a solid fuel comprising carbon.

Claim 75. (new) The process according to claim 72, wherein said combustion from one or more submerged burners is provided by combusting a solid fuel comprising carbon.

Claim 76. (new) The process according to Claim 68, wherein acid produced during the formation of the silicate is used to treat the silicate so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 77. (new) The process according to Claim 70, wherein acid produced during the formation of the silicate is used to treat the silicate so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 78. (new) The process according to Claim 71, wherein acid produced during the formation of the silicate is used to treat the silicate so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 79. (new) The process according to Claim 72, wherein acid produced during the formation of the silicate is used to treat the silicate so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 80. (new) The process according to Claim 75, wherein acid produced during the formation of the silicate is used to treat the silicate so as to precipitate silica in the form of particles.

Claim 81. (new) The process according to Claim 68, wherein said process produces sodium sulfate which is recycled to the formation of said silicate.

Claim 82. (new) The process according to Claim 71, wherein said process produces sodium sulfate which is recycled to the formation of said silicate.

Claim 83. (new) The process according to Claim 72, wherein said process produces sodium sulfate which is recycled to the formation of said silicate.

Claim 84. (new) The process according to Claim 75, wherein said process produces sodium sulfate which is recycled to the formation of said silicate.

Claim 85. (new) The process according to Claim 49, further comprising melting said silicate in a refining or conditioning step.

Claim 86. (new) The process according to Claim 53, further comprising melting said silicate in a refining or conditioning step.

Claim 87. (new) The process according to Claim 65, further comprising melting said silicate in a refining or conditioning step.

## SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENTS

The amendments to the specification correct obvious typographical errors.

New claim 49 finds support throughout the specification and in the original claims. Note, for example, specification page 2, line 24-page 3, line 9 and the description of Figure 1:

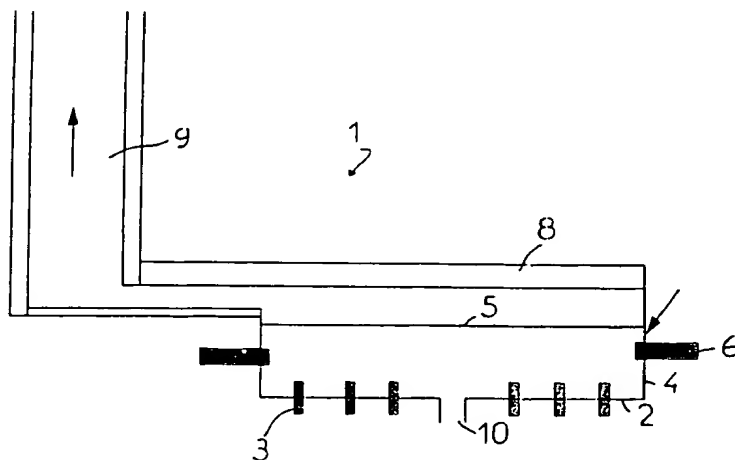


FIG-1

at specification page 15 showing contiguous (touching or connected throughout) molten mass 5, submerged burners 3, and tap hole 10 for extracting molten silicate (page 16, lines 4-5). This molten mass is to be contrasted with the reaction zone in a fluid bed reactor, as will be made more clear below.

With regard to dependent claims 50-75, note support at, e.g., specification page 4, lines 26ff, page 8, lines 1ff, page 3, line 6, page 2, line 36, page 2, lines 25-27, page 2,



line 34, page 15, line 17-20, page 2, lines 30-31, page 6, lines 9-16, page 10, lines 3-15  
and 27-36, page 10, line 37- page 11, line 25 and page 1, lines 15-24.

Accordingly, no new matter has been entered.